

What's New?: Board of Trustees Updates

Kris Gordon, Vice-President of the Board of Trustees, thanked the Strategic Planning team for helping the congregation define our dreams and vision as a community. This will be essential to our planning for the second stage of expanding into space that will support our mission more fully. The Discovery stage confirmed the congregation's desire to have an impact both on our community and on the UU movement, and we are now anticipating that we will be more able to do both with our larger footprint, expanding on our strengths and good work. The Board and ministers appreciate the vote of confidence from the congregation that is making it possible to move forward as quickly as possible.

In addition to the Strategic Planning process this fall, the UCS Board and ministers were inspired by a leadership team's visit to First UU Church in Dallas last year, which the UUA sponsored as part of their recognition of UCS as a Leap of Faith congregation. The Dallas congregation has made bold steps to become a regional and national leading UU presence, including building a campus with ample room to support children's worship, a building for adult RE, and a huge kitchen to facilitate group gatherings. They shared their vision and capital campaign strategies, and are continuing to mentor us as we pursue our own.

Kris thanked the Dangler purchase negotiation team: Gary Buscemi, Trevor Bond, Tom Howard and Vanessa Southern. She noted that we were truly fortunate to have Gary and Trevor as members with extensive commercial real estate experience and expertise, as team leaders. The team is now working on meeting all the requirements to close on the Dangler property as planned for May 15. This involves our retaining lawyers, an architect, and environmental consultants to ensure that we will be able to obtain variances to use and build on the property to fit the congregation's needs, as we will explore over the next months. We are also investigating the possibility of having a business lease and operate the funeral home while we are getting the variances and raising the funds to renovate and/or build.

We have chartered a capital campaign committee to begin an ambitious fundraising for not only the purchase but also building an expanded church home that will help us live out our mission and dreams. The team will be led by David Gordon, Carol Ulmer, Julia Miller, and Emilie Boggis. What this will take will begin with our recognition that we all need to give of our time and our treasure, to make the dream a reality.

Questions and discussion included possible designs for use of the property, purchase price, and potential lease arrangements with a funeral home operator. The architect's initial drawings are available for viewing in the office, and members may contact the negotiating team for more information.